

March 21, 2001

All Poultry and Egg Suppliers

NOTICE TO THE TRADE-MARCH 2001

USDA is reviewing its specifications to bring products more in line with commercial product specifications—making it less likely that production plants need special production runs and special packaging materials to produce USDA commodities. This should lower costs, reduce delivery and production delays, and open business to more competition.

We are initiating a formal review and are soliciting comments on Poultry Programs' specifications. We are particularly interested in changes that deal with shipping container sizes, packaging requirements, and composition of the commodities. Any input you provide related to certification and lab testing requirements would be appreciated as well.

Attached is a list of questions to help generate ideas for comments. Please ensure the appropriate announcement and specification are noted on your recommendations. Both this Notice and the specifications may be accessed on our Website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/cp>. If you do not have access to the Website, hard copies may be obtained from the Commodity Procurement Branch on 202-720-7693. I appreciate you reviewing these documents and providing your recommendations for change.

Please submit your comments via fax (202/720-5871) by April 6. This will enable us to compile the information for possible discussion at our industry-wide meeting to be held in Washington, DC, on April 17.

I am confident that, with your assistance, we can make the commodity purchase program more efficient and compatible with commercial practices.

Howard M. Magwire
Acting Deputy Administrator

Attachment

Commodity Specification Questions

1. What commodities do you currently produce for USDA, AMS, Poultry Programs?
2. Does a predominant commercial standard/specification exist for any of the commodities? If so, name the commodity(s).
3. Is there a commercial pack size? If so, does it differ from the USDA-procured commodity(s)? Indicate the commodity and commercial pack size(s).
4. Do the commercial standards/specifications differ from USDA? If so, name the commodity and how they differ (specifically in regard to):
 - (a) Food Safety
 - (b) Nutrition Composition
 - (c) Laboratory Testing



MAIN MENU

Food Purchases: AMS purchases meats, poultry, fish, fruit, vegetables, egg products, dry beans, and tree nuts for distribution in the National School Lunch program and other Federal Food assistance programs. Products are purchased through competitive bids or negotiated contracts. These purchase programs assist farmers, commodity producers, and processors by helping to maintain stable commodity prices. Grain and dairy products are purchased by [USDA's Farm Service Agency](#). Select commodity listed below to view the food catalog, information on how to sell products to USDA, purchase reports, and what's new.

- [Beef](#)
- [Chicken](#)
- [Goose](#)
- [Eggs](#)
- [Fish](#)
- [Fruit](#)
- [Other Red Meats](#)
- [Juice](#)
- [Nuts, Beans and Corn Syrup](#)
- [Pork](#)
- [Turkey](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- Buffalo
- Lamb
- [Mission Statement for Commodity Procurement](#)
- [Small & Minority Business Opportunities](#)
- [What's New](#)

FOOD ASSISTANCE: --Foods purchased are provided to school children participating in the National School Lunch Program and to, native Americans, needy families, the elderly, and the homeless through Federal Food Assistance Programs administered by USDA's [Food and Nutrition Service](#).

- [How to Obtain USDA Commodities](#)
- [Market News and Other Commodity Reports](#)
- [Food Catalog](#) -- Commodities purchased for Federal Food Assistance Programs

[USDA Federal Purchase Services for States](#)